

CHAPTER 9

Education and the Discipline of Modernity

First the mission taught us that we have a mind, and then they gave us thoughts to help fill it up. We also learned that time exists, and this needs to be filled up as well. Otherwise we are liable to sin.

GOU, 1980

For you [Westerners], time is a god.

MOSES, 1980

As the epigrams suggest, any account of education in Melanesia is inseparable from a discussion of the shape and influence of Christianity. More rapidly than the state and with greater authority, Christian churches penetrated the hinterlands, setting themselves up as the primary instruments and institutions of scholastic, civic, and moral education. Bundled together in a kind of cultural porridge were a potpourri of lessons on citizenship and the New Testament, the embrace of a national history and the reality of an afterlife, the rights of the individual and the one-to-one relationship we all have with our Maker. From the moment of their birth, nongovernmental organizations such as the Christian churches were to have a great hand in governing the countries of Melanesia. Not only were the churchmen the major force in the initiation of new schools in remote regions, but the elite who framed their national constitutions were loyal sons of the Christianity that educated them. Many of these constitutions, exemplified by that of Papua New Guinea, invoke Christianity as part of their national heritage, assuming as a matter of faith that Christian and national identities can be seamlessly threaded together. But the issue, as colonial history knows well, is more complicated. Due to the internal divisions and divisiveness within a Christianity that, paradoxically, represents itself as universal, Christian education could not but insinuate narratives of identity that are both more local and more global than those of the national state. The most educated Maring defined themselves as Anglican in opposition to other and lesser species of Christianity, and also as embracing a universal Christianity in opposition to all forms of paganism. The shaping and inculcation of this Western set of imbricated identities

was inseparable from the missionary educational system. It would teach them that they were Anglicans, the virtues of this faith revealed in its material, social, and spiritual contributions to each of them as individuals. It would teach that their national identity was bound to Christianity and thus to the encompassing gesture itself so that ultimately colonialism disappeared into the bodies of the colonized. Finally it would teach them that they were all soldiers in a global Christianity that stood against not only paganism but also the satanic forces of immorality that vexed the modern world. So the reality under construction centered on the proliferation and dance of categorical identities—an Anglican Maring, a Christian citizen, and a member of world Christianity. Those schooled in the context of southern Africa will find this bumpy but charted terrain.

Until and through independence, Christian missions in Melanesia bore the educational burden with considerable assistance from first the colonial administration and later its postindependent successor. Mission and government segregated the colonial education system into “A” (Australian) and “T” (tribal) type schools. The A species, drafted for the expatriate population and taught by teachers imported from the south, taught the standard Australian syllabus—including of course lessons on Australian history. The T type, run by missionaries and generally staffed with “native” teachers, taught a rather different lesson, focusing primarily on English, counting, and the lineaments of Western sensibility and civilization. This was also a division between town and hinterland insofar as it was government policy not to compete with the evangelists by setting up schools in mission districts. Missionary and government imagined education as part of the order and systematicity of the modern world and as a set of values to be acquired by the student. Objectively, they saw education as a touchstone of modernity, an indispensable agent in the eclipse of tradition. Subjectively, the disposition to learn was a critical internal stance and discipline toward grasping the modern and developing the kind of mind that might do so. A symbiosis emerged in which the mission men maintained schools in remote regions, saving Australian/expatriate tax dollars and the difficulties of finding and retaining teachers, in return for the right to fuse education and salvation. For a long time, most Maring believed that the reason people learned to read was so that they could read the Bible in order to appropriate the source of its magical materialism. In the jagged puzzle that was modernity, reading and counting, the authority of Jesus, and a desired cornucopia of commodities were all interlocking pieces. The schools in the Maring region were always of the T type even when they were no longer so called.

Entering the school was a rite of civilization. And thus an encounter with the moral economy of Western thought. Dressing up for the occasion mattered—a point on which the Maring concurred absolutely. Given their

intricately woven beetle bonnets, confections of bird plumes and possum fur, shell necklaces and nose plugs, little could resonate more with their thinking of the world. So they were hardly surprised when the mission men argued that it was unthinkable that children should attend school in traditional garb. Father Etterley, the main architect of the school, explained to the Maring that there was something indecent and unnatural about the free exposure of flesh in the classroom. Only a covered body could uncover the mysteries of civilization, an education that could connect the dots between the economy of the body and that of the commodity. With more than a touch of magic, the missionaries also argued that it was more natural to learn Western knowledge in Western clothes. Thus they had clothes—shorts and T-shirts for the boys, frocks for the girls—ferried up from the south, clothing drives instigated in small parish churches around Australia to uplift local souls by clothing the bodies of these Christians in the making. The mission hoped that not only would the school children become imbued with the virtues of clothes but that they would carry this into adulthood and spread the spirit of decency until it became the *pasin belong ol* (“the trend,” Tok pijin). This was important because the exposure of the body was both an invitation to the senses to feast improperly and a sign of the absence of propriety. There was a short step from skin to sin that clothes would lengthen by the magic of concealment. Therefore the mission awarded all of the schoolchildren gifts of clothes—reason enough, some Maring observed, to attend school at least for a while. That the clothes were almost always slightly too big for Maring bodies made them that much more fashionable, the runway to heaven emphasizing virtue at every turn. Through Maring eyes, the missionaries were certainly men of the cloth. Through missionary eyes, the Maring penchant for Western clothes expressed their progress—as several of the mission men explained to me in a self-satisfied way, glad to spy a sign of success in a sea of ambiguity.

The primary school at Koinambe, the secondary school in Mt. Hagen, and higher level education at, for instance, the Anglican mission seminary were all instrumental in producing a distinct field of education imbued with its own logic, spaces, temporalities, place in the developmental cycles of person and household, forms of reward and failure, boundaries, and relationships to other domains of practice. Where traditional forms of education were diffused throughout the constellation of local practices, the West would create and consecrate a distinct field of practice whose intent was to prepare individuals for real life. At a deeper level, the education system encapsulated all the epistemological values of a capitalist and democratic nation-state of autonomous individuals. It did this invisibly, shielded by the mask of what was functionally necessary to learn the modern world. The lessons in math, English, and geography were

small compared to the lessons in personhood, the production of value, and the nature of knowledge itself. To arrive on time, to sit up straight in school and pay attention to the day's lesson, and to do this day after day in the company of others, supervised by the teacher and above him the headmaster, taking competitive exams to test one's personal knowledge, was a forced march into the heart of Western forms of knowledge, desire, and dispositions. The very existence of the schooling system invited an opposition between what was modern and what was traditional, and in this sense it helped to bring *kastam* into being as a category of thought. An opposition arose between forms of *kastam* knowledge transmitted from senior clan members to their junior kin and modern knowledge transmitted by strangers in service of the Church. Beneath this opposition was a realm of epistemological and dispositional contrasts that were even more striking. From the viewpoint of the missionaries, local teachers, and the education system generally, the indigenous methods of education, instruction, and training appeared diffuse, episodic, and casual. They seemed to be looking over their shoulder at the past rather than ahead to the future. Once it was presumed that there was a field of education founded on a set scientific body of knowledge and inculcated by means of a disciplined method of instruction, then the indigenous system came into relief as its opposite. More than new things to know, the Maring needed new ways to know things. As is often the case on the frontier between cultures, the content of the schooling system induced changes less telling than those animated by the way in which the lessons were taught.

Education in the Past Tense

Before the arm of encompassment touched the Maring, there was and could be no difference between education and socialization because there was no field of instruction distinct from practice. The training of the young was regular without being regularized, orchestrated without being systematized, their kin bearing a sense of responsibility to practically instruct them in the practice of everyday life. As food stood at the center of Maring life, the child's social, ethical, and moral education began in an attempt to instil the proper ways of eating, sharing, and nurturing others. The maxim was that children's upbringing began when they were weaned, and indeed the official naming ceremony for a child sometimes corresponded to this moment. In keeping with the simple mode of reproduction, adults and children all participated in the same culture, though in varying degrees corresponding to their station in the developmental cycle of the person. The upbringing of children thus flowed easily into social, economic, and political behavior of their kin, the aims and ambitions of the young

confluent with those of their parents. Socialization was cyclical and rather determinate in that everything in the universe conspired to orient children toward the same reality as their elders. Accordingly, there were no special behaviors, rewards, punishments, and the like associated with socialization, parents needing to coerce children only after the doxic world had waned and the breach between generations had widened. By 1980, socialization had become more troubled because the objective structure of a now encompassed reality was no longer in sync with the cognitive and dispositional structures of the senior generation. Once a clan's reproduction was no longer cyclical, cloistered, and nearly determinate, once the future of its children was aimed at a world perpetually different from that of parents, then socialization became the politics of upbringing, a stage on which the bodies of children were introduced to the orthodoxies of their parents in the context of an ever widening public sphere that drew them in a very different direction. The encompassment of Melanesia probably changed parenting even more than it changed childhood.

In contrast to Western education, traditional learning was neither a text nor was it decontextualized. The cultural forms of knowledge, desire, and dispositions were not built up piece by piece during the progress of a child's life. Rather, the total pattern of practice was present as generative schemes from the beginning, the child coming to master that batch of pragmatic and productive actions in respect to others. The child learned to elicit or draw out of the world its potentialities, as a social relationship already present within the other, as a fruitfulness already present in the earth, as a spiritual blessing already present in the desires of the ancestors. As such, education was never about controlling or gaining the upper hand on others, nature, or spirits, rather about the continual appropriation and internalization of these potentialities. No one could ever teach these schemes of perception, appropriation, and so on because they were never the object of explicit representation, though they were, of course, inculcated in the socializing process. The category of teacher could not possess any functional autonomy because the field of education did not exist as such, there was no explicit body of knowledge, and learning did not have any gatekeeping functions (e.g., who would attain big-man status). Not surprisingly, the cultural metaphor for education was never the filling up of an empty space with objective objects, the house of culture built up brick by brick, story by story, but rather the development of the body itself. The release of potentialities that were always present. In this world, agents were never educationally finished since every social transaction begot another, every gift, every harvest, every act of propitiation completing one phase of an interaction even as it instigated another.

As the rainy season follows the dry, so this vision of sociality and nature, people and things, implies that socialization was never about for-

mal methods for transmitting information about the objective world to possessive, self-contained individuals. The critical forms of disenchantment and contrast that animate the West—the division of an objectively conceived reality into nature, society, and individual, and the division of the subject into mind, body, and spirit—were never present as such in the Melanesian world. Other, that is, than as its inverse, a conceptual possibility made real by the modern.

The Gender of Education

In the indigenous world, gender was both a modality of agency and a stance toward that world. In this vision, the efficacy of women and men were not the same; women excelled at the forms of sociality and transaction constitutive of the domestic sphere while men excelled at those constitutive of interdomestic relations. The enterprise of men consisted of taking products created jointly with their spouse and/or sister, that is domestically, and transforming them into objects of interdomestic exchange. The distinction between the practice of men as husbands (or brothers) and the practice of men as clansmen becomes an idiom through which the possibility for acting on the world unfolds. Unlike in the West, the distinction between domestic and interdomestic does not implicate any distinction between the private life of the household and the public life of collective action. Each was equally relational and public. Where they differed was in the kinds of realities they engendered and the sociality they made visible.

In the context of education, the logic of this relationship clashed with the logic of Western schooling—at least Western schooling in its late-twentieth-century incarnation as an instrument of emancipation and egalitarianism. For senior clansmen, it was self-evident that only boys should attend school because its aim was to prepare them for the kinds of interdomestic relations characteristic of the modern. The coordinates of kastam located exchange relations and managing a trade store on the same plane: that of male action whose intent was to socially reproduce the clan. For senior women, it was equally self-evident that girls should attend to the interests of their mothers. These concerns, centering on domestic relations, such as the production of taro, pigs, coffee, string bags, and the like, allowed small need for the skills of schooling. There was also in place an age effect, as the skills of young girls were much more valuable than those of their brothers. True to this logic, most of the schoolgoers were young boys. The mission argued vehemently against this position and called upon the Maring families to send their daughters as well as their sons to school. The mission reasoned that all sexes were equally children of God and that every individual, no matter what gender, should be allowed to

reach his/her natural potential. The mission saw in this, like in the practice of buying a wife, the oppression of tradition against the enlightenment of the modern.

Some key leaders of the junior generation agreed with them. They both won the approval of the Church and gained a stroke in their confrontation with the senior generation by sending their daughters to school. Almost invariably, it was recently married, educated, churchgoing men who sent their daughters to the mission school and applied pressure on others to do likewise. Most women of the junior generation applauded the move to send girls to school as part of a more general process of increasing personal freedom. The equation was simple and predictable, though certainly not absolute. The more a child's parents had been exposed to the agents and institutions of the modern—because of their age, education, and/or proximity to a mission school—the more likely they were to send their children to school, including a greater percentage of daughters. In particular, members of the junior generation living on the mission station believed that the West treated men and women the same. For them, the status of the nurse in charge of the hospital exemplified this rehearsal of Western ideology, though ironically she had, in her own words, “escaped” to Melanesia to avoid the sting of what she decried as “pervasive sex discrimination” in her homeland medical system. Again the ironic reversals of the frontier imbued the modernizing process with its own peculiar character.

Lessons in Epistemology and Desire

Going to school required that the Maring learn a new set of correspondences between time, space, and forms of behavior. Schooling was a novel practice that not only combined these elements in unexpected ways, but created new forms of space and time and behavior in the process. As a foreign office of Western epistemology, the school system conceived time as having an externality and objectiveness that transcended, and in that process subordinated, practical and phenomenological time. The second-hand clock that hung on the school wall, the time-defined schedule of activities, the assumption that people should desire to conform to deadlines and appointments (and desire that desire as well), the revelation that human activity itself can be timed and measured, all these enshrined the modern god of time. Whereas, in the village, time existed in a practical and embodied state—the time to live an activity, such as harvesting taro once it had reached an edible size; the existential time of doing, which was inseparable from its sociality (e.g., the felt duration of a practice, such as building a fence or weeding a garden, depends on the company of the moment); and the seasonal time defined by the rhythms of sun and rain,

harvesting and planting. In this world, time was not an intangible commodity that appeared to possess a life and authority of its own. Talking about time was no one's preoccupation. Time was not spent or saved like money. It was not lost like a lousy investment or gained by working more rapidly. There was no covert equation of time and economy, no metaphors that assumed that time, and hence human action itself, was a commodity. There was no disenchantment between nature and society because neither term of the equation existed as such—only relations of collectivity and sociality in nature. Against this indigenous sense of time—a sense that was simultaneously objective and subjective at the same time—the schooling system in concert with other Western institutions began to fix a notion of objective time that existed independently of subjects. None of our covert cultural metaphors captures this better than the idea that time is a container that agents fill up with actions—a point that my housemate Gou made pointedly in the epigram above. In the same sense, the mission sought to privatize time, to instill in its converts and pupils the value that *their* time belonged to them and that its management was critical to the construction of their subjectivity. The modern person conformed his/her own private time to the strictures of objective time. And was proud of the accomplishment. So one of the oft-repeated school lessons was how to read a watch, and, more, to learn to determine how long it takes to complete a task as though, true to Western ideology, there was an intrinsic connection between a task, how long it took to complete, and the underlying values that were represented. The modernist perspective takes this so much for granted that it does not question the practice of timing intelligence tests, as though there was somehow a connection between a person's intelligence and how fast they work. Not surprisingly, the commodity most sought after by the junior generation was a wristwatch, the young men sporting watches like badges and body decoration of their newfound view of the world. The watches reported that they had the money and mobility to buy an expensive good sold only in town and associated with Westerners, that they possessed the knowledge to read the hands of time, and that they subscribed—if only in principle—to a modern conception of time, planning, and behavior. In this and other respects, the agents and institutions of encompassment increasingly built objectivism into the world by building it into the way that people viewed their world.

If anything frustrated the Western mentality, it was the Maring's seeming disregard for punctuality and planning. And the mission men, especially the station manager, saw this promiscuous and "foggy" relationship to time as a barrier to advancement—which indeed it is in a Western-run world. He complained repeatedly that women and the senior generation were impossible; seemingly like clockwork they appeared late and inappropriately. They appeared during lunch time to sell their coffee to a

station cooperative that kept only morning hours; they showed up on Tuesday for a Monday airplane flight and then simply waited for the Thursday departure. But even those with watches won with mission wages sometimes found it hard to eclipse the dispositions of customary time, the most intractable and trying example being their failure to report to work on time. That at least is the story the mission men told. Pejoratives aside, it was indeed the case that at this stage in the advance of modernity only a few Maring had internalized the disposition to conform to objective time, to feel a compulsion from within to meet the expectations of the clock, to hear its ticking as an insistent call to conformity. On more than a few occasions, the station manager, the priest in charge, and the Bible translator asked me when the Maring would learn time, as though this were an enigma so deep they were willing to chance a little anthropology.

Against the dispositions of *kastam* time, school and the mission generally thought that integral to its mandate was the inculcation of the modern sense of objective time and obedience to its artifacts, such as schedules. Students' time at the mission station was divided into church time, schooling time, lunch time, sports/play time, work time, and free time with specific forms of thought and action appropriate to each of these times. For the schoolgoers, their day began with morning services after which they filed into their classrooms. The school divided the morning session into two or three periods, featuring reading and English, alongside practical activities like learning the Gregorian calendar and the solar system. At noon by the clock's telling, students broke for lunch, returning for an afternoon session that included sports activities and a periodic work detail to clean the grounds. Specific activities, like playing soccer, done at an appointed time and day (Wednesday and Thursday afternoon), corresponded to specific spaces (the soccer field) and forms of social relations (a non-kinship-based team). The same held true with the morning prayer to begin classes, the classes themselves, and indeed every aspect of the organized school. Children learned that the schedule of activities did not depend on them or even on their teachers; they were not its author or cause. There was an external force that stood outside the sociality of the students and teachers that orchestrated their actions. As the poet Neruda observed: we live within the compass of the "clockface whose cadence utters our lifetimes" (1959). The coordinates of the modern were being set in place, slowly, variably, but inevitably as an incoming tide.

According to the priest in charge, the headmaster, and the European advisers who occasionally passed through, the organization of school should be a living artifact of the organization of mind in body. The distinction between the cerebral gestures of learning the curriculum and the physical exertions of sports and play ran, like an underground river, through the terrain of their statements, sometimes seeping up to the sur-

face but even then written off as a natural occurrence. The organization of classroom instruction that sought to isolate the pupil's mind was inseparable from the goal of instilling knowledge in the abstract as well as abstract knowledge. True to the modernist epistemology of the person, the mission separated mind from body and both from the "human" spirit. This secular trinity of mind, body, and spirit was institutionally reflected in what Westerners took to be the primary purpose of the school, the hospital, and the church. The school concentrated on the life of the mind, the hospital on the biological individual, and the church on the spirit or soul. It was subliminally reflected in the Holy Trinity, the canon that there existed an omniscient God the Father, an incarnate Christ, and a Holy Spirit. In sum, the Western conception was that there not only existed a level of organization above and beyond the physical brain—the mind—but that the mind had an ontological realness independent of both body and spirit. By contrast, indigenous concepts such as *min* (life force, bodily consciousness), *nomane* (soul, culture, spirit), and *tep* (speech, sentience) began in the premise that mind, body, and spirit are fused in the first instance.

If Maring of all ages could concur on any one point, it was that prior to encompassment they did not know that they had minds, and that one of the advances of their contact with the mission was learning that, housed within their head, there was an invisible container that they could fill with information. Further, that some containers were more alert and easier to fill. This stood in contrast to the indigenous notion that knowledge was situationally specific and relational, a performance of the thinking body to meet a social objective. It might be said of someone that they acted intelligently when speaking politically, but there was no linguistic construction to say that someone was intelligent as a general and abstract quality. Mission education began to establish the notion of timeless internal states, constant properties of the person that agents express through their actions, these states appearing differentially across contexts for action. In the school curriculum, an underlying motif of the stories that the children read was whether an agent would or would not express a timeless internal state—such as their courage, honesty, or fidelity to their parents. In another of the ironic twists of the frontier, Maring schoolchildren were introduced to the myths of other Papua New Guineans through English translations that epistemologically transmuted the stories into morality tales based on the expression of internal states. Thus in addition to a mind that was filled with knowledge the school taught a body filled with timeless internal states.

A critical feature that distinguished Western schooling from the indigenous process of learning lay in their respective views of truth. Not least was the claim of certainty of knowledge on the part of Western education. From this perspective, the world can be taught precisely because it

is organized and ordered, clarity of thought rendering the world unambiguous. There exists a canon of truths whose verity is independent of social relations, which is thus true for all people be they Western or Melanesian. By contrast, Melanesian truths, such as the existence of sorcerers, were so inseparable from their sociality that Westerners, as outsiders, were immune from their malevolence. By the same logic, the Maring universe was not organized and orderly throughout, animated by principles that inquiring minds could discover through the technologies of science. Rather there was order and organization at the center of the community, which gradually gave way to increasing entropy and disorder at the periphery. The domesticated and certain center opposed to the wildness and unpredictability of the bush. But more than this, Western epistemology separated the world into “objective reality”—what is out there, the tools agents use to grasp and measure what is real (numbers, measures of length and weight, etc.), and representations of that reality (e.g., written documents, photographs, recordings). Thus, technology and the commodities of the West engendered a reality that, appearing to exist independent of persons, could be measured (in terms of time saved, money gained, etc.) and then represented (by an entry in a passbook saving account, the trade store ledger, etc.). In other words, the school taught a reality that it was instrumental in creating. And insofar as this reality was not already inculcated within the schoolgoers, they had yet to internalize the underlying epistemology and dispositions that would allow them to grasp the lessons taught. What the mission men saw as the limits of local intelligence was actually the limits of Western intelligence about other realities.

Ethnographic Interlude

Sometimes a small hole in the universe would open and allow in a light that would suggest to the mission men that they did not know nearly enough of what needed to be known. On one occasion, I, the station manager, and his friend (another VSO recruit) tagged along with several Maring men to the lower bush to “look for” the bird of paradise. Off to discover the habitat and habits of these birds, the station manager and his friend asked the Maring questions about the birds and trees. The soft drizzling rain that filtered through the forest canopy was nothing next to the shower of information that Kaiya and his friends provided. They detailed how different trees changed from season to season, the insects that frequented the trees and their reproductive and eating habits, the birds that feed on these insects and those that competed with the insects for fruits, the calls of the birds, where they made their nests, how they treated their young, everything classified and named down to the subspecies level.

Astounded by this downpour of information, technical information, information learned by experience and education, the station manager commented that “each of them seemed to qualify for a Ph.D. in botany.” “Why then,” he asked me, himself, and the world in general, “were they so dismal and slow in school?” Why indeed!

The Subject and the Objective

The school was set apart in space and time so that a marked distinction could be constructed between the world and observing child. This reality was then arranged before the viewing subject and organized into a system of classification that was also a system of signification. This was exemplified in the lessons on geography, which were also lessons on nationalism, organized around a globe. The globe showed the Maring the collective world of nations, laid out before them in a manner that the organization of local territories never was or could be. This could not but project a sense of order—embodied in the codification of the relationship between territories and nations, and in the relationship between the observing child and the globe itself. In his work on the colonization of Egypt, Mitchell (1988) describes the relationship:

The technique of . . . fixing an interior and exterior, and of positioning the observing subject, are what create an appearance of order, an order that works by appearance. The world is set up before an observing subject as though it were the picture of something. Its order occurs in the relationship between observer and picture, appearing and experienced in terms of the relationship between the picture and the plan or meaning it represents. It follows that the appearance of order is at the same time an order of appearance, a hierarchy. The world appears to the observer as a relationship between picture and reality, the one present but secondary, a mere representation, the other only represented, but prior, more original, more real. This order of appearance is what might be called the hierarchy of truth. (60)

A triangulation is set up between the subject, picture/description, and reality in which the truth and its apprehension depends on the iconographic relationship between the picture/description and the world, while the ability of agents to internalize the truth depends on the authenticity of this relationship in respect to their mental capacity. This is a historically determinate way of orchestrating the interrelationship between world, code, and subject—the modern way. It differs, first of all, from indigenous

learning, which assumes an almost perfect intimacy between teaching and doing. People learned to plant taro, paint a war shield, sacrifice pigs, and almost everything else by the practical mimicry of their kin. Leading to the practical mastery of practice. But it was also and always that the appearance of order conformed to another logic, an implicational logic that centered on the way that the relationality of one action, object, or person animates, excites, elicits, influences another. By this logic, there was no difference between implication and causation; they were reciprocal. Because they were reciprocal and so entailed, the signs of the world were inseparable from that world. Maring epistemology was not a “code” for decoding the world—a description of reality extrinsic to that reality. Some examples. In the epoch of war, the uprooting of the rumbim plant implied/caused the deterioration of relations between clans, which, in turn, implied/caused the precipitation of mortal combat, which further implied/caused the assumption by men of food and sexual taboos, and so on. The secular and ritual actions were not commentaries about the world but actions performed upon it. The process of learning the world concentrated on learning how to excite, animate, elicit, and influence. Socialization was a matter of mastering the implicational chain triggered and presupposed by an action, object, or person. When a man dreamed that he had hunted wild pig in the haunts of the lower bush this implied that his life force, his *min*, had sojourned during the night, and further that he should, on waking, gather his bow and arrow to search for his prey. Differently but by the same logic, when a man bought a commodity (a bag of rice, a carton of canned fish, etc.) and then removed it to the context of wealth exchange, such as a marriage payment, he was following a logic that said that the change of context implied that the object was attached to him in a new way, as a mediation of his sociality with others. Similarly, in the modern era people could use rice like taro not because rice symbolized what taro symbolized, but because they were both white and soft and swell when cooked. The relations of sameness and sympathy were what counted. In contrast to the West, there was no underlying quasi-autonomous epistemological domain of symbolic representations of the world. The representations were attached to both the world and the subject. Where the West is committed to seeing an ontological separation between the world, the intentions and interests of the subject, and the mechanics of knowing, the Maring assumed that they were inseparable in the first instance. Where the West committed all of its cultural resources—from the creation of the scientific method to its ideology of objectivity—to creating and preserving this separation, the Maring committed nothing other than a concern for the proper execution of their practices. In essence, because the Maring and Melanesians did not believe that the order of their world was based on an order of appearances, the character and content of

socialization centered on doing and enacting. Or, to put this another way, persons need to have minds only if knowledge is separated ontologically from doing and agents are the cause of their own actions. And so the Maring learned they had minds in the process of learning a new reality.

Discipline and Order

Central to the process of encompassment was the creation of order, discipline, and regimentation. Recall the concern of the kiaps to create ordered villages that sparkled with sanitation. The same was true of education. Mission educators saw an undisputable linkage between the inculcation of order and discipline and the value of the education process itself. Central to the creation of order was to imbue the children with a respect for orderliness and cleanliness, to begin, as the headmaster noted, “to teach the children the importance of these things so that they could progress” (Dec. 1979). But this was no easy task, as the Western geometry of the body, the straight lines, even spacing, looking forward, shoulders back, did not resonate with *kastam*. As one teacher noted, just getting the students to line up properly was a small victory. But apparently a march worth taking as the school strived to teach its students that the properly aligned body in the proper clothes was essential to educating their newfound minds. Not the least of the lessons of modernity was that order was an end in itself, people should construct their subjectivity such that they can feel the accomplishment and taste the pride of creating order. To pursue the objective of order required a regime of constant surveillance, a long-established feature of the European schooling system. The indigenous concept of watching the behavior of others had its center of gravity in agents’ sociality and intentionality. The goal of observing others was to uncloak the hierarchy of intentions that lay behind their actions, to go beyond the “skin” of the action to its underlying beliefs, desires, and judgments. The agency of surveillance was to elicit the sociality of the other(s) rather than to orchestrate the internal state of others. So where the Maring located order in the relational interaction itself, the school, following Western epistemology, located order in the collectively manifest but individually produced control of the self. Surveillance would insure that each child understood that he (and occasionally she) was the sole author of his own acts, and that good, successful, modern persons had aligned their internal states with their public behavior. Accordingly, the teachers scolded, reprimanded, and punished children for behaving as Maring children behaved. Especially the talking, banter, and laughing that seemed to accompany all ordinary interactions was, as the Maring phrased it, made taboo. The per-

ception was that the classroom was a special type of ritual in which the participants had to assume an odd and uncustomary set of taboos.

The classroom was also unusual in that the physical confinement of the child seemed important. Where Maring education involved the body practically and instrumentally—in the act of planting, singing, talking—Western education sought to still the body, to quiet and contain its ordinary motion so to emphasize and elevate the mind. The child was expected to internalize this disposition both as a sign of respect for his teachers and fellow students and as a technique for his own self-improvement. Not surprisingly, the teachers in the school put great store in the virtues of self-control and self-respect, seeing in them the key dispositions in the Western acquisition of knowledge. They would tell the students that they would only acquire the cargo of the West when they had learned how to learn, though as one teacher pointed out in lamenting tones, progress was difficult because the children went home on the weekends, took extended periods of time off from school, and were surrounded by relatives who were too mired in the old ways.

As observed, Western education, in following the path of the modern, set great store in defining and refining ways to measure the real. Accordingly, a critical feature of school was counting, but more than this the use of number and quantity to identify value. Agents could identify, indicate, and assess the value of an object or a relationship, indeed all objects and relationships, by a numerical value. Thus the relationship between a student and the process of education could be reduced to a grade; the relationship between the owner of a business and workers could be reduced to a salary.

Education and Social Life

In this Western vision of education, the activities of school were distinct from practice and the motions of everyday life. What the sequestered child acquired through schooling was to be accumulated and stored for a later and larger purpose: when the individual now armed with the requisite forms of knowledge, disposition, and desire reentered the world. The Western model was applied even though it was far from clear that what children learned in school had any connection to the contours of the society they would reenter. This inspired a contradiction common to the world of the encompassed. On one side of the divide, the Maring conceived education as an escape route from the confinement of local life and community. The junior generation imagined that, once educated to the modern, they could sidestep the obligations of kinship, migrate to the towns

beyond the domineering shouts of big-men and elders, and win prestige through a position in public service or with the Church. Education was a raffle in which the lucky won freedom and reward, the right to experiment with the modern world and enjoy its cargo. On this view, education was a means of disengaging from one community and entering another—and also a cultural journey from the bush, the indigenous metaphor of the periphery now returning to engulf all of indigenous life, to the freedom of urban civilization. On this score, Penga, the lapsed seminary student, was explicit.

Boys go to primary and then high school to get away from their “fathers” [senior clansmen]. If they are lucky, a job with the government will come to them, allowing them to send gifts home [to maintain their kin ties and augment their status] but also do whatever they want. Once someone has enjoyed the life of the town, it becomes hard to return to the bush. It is everyone’s wish who goes to school to find this government job, but few do and no one knows why. Men who are educated but do not get jobs either drift about or they become a raskol [the distinctive genre of bandit/delinquent common to Papua New Guinea].

For the Maring, the very process of attending high school instigated a progressive estrangement from the intimacy of community, a slowly evolving distance that also animated a disenchantment with the substance of local lifeways. In part this was because the high schools were located in either the Wahgi Valley or Mt. Hagen, meaning that schoolgoers lived away from home and in the company of other peoples. Moreover, the schools could not help but impart a distinction between urban, urbane life and the simplicity of a hinterlands of simple farmers.

On the other side of the divide, those who followed the star of education often came away empty-handed. Partially disengaged from their local communities but unable to matriculate into Western occupations, they could send home only their sense of shame and failure, even as all the commodities and excesses of urban life remained beyond their means. And also beyond their ken to understand, an unfulfilled promise, “no one knows why.” MacLean (1994), echoing the views of Penga, makes this point from an interesting angle.

The Highlands’ critique of raskol makes the general critique of education particularly plain. Raskols are stereotypically understood as products of high school education who have failed to get jobs, an increasingly probable scenario these days. In many

ways they occupy a limbo in local conceptions. They have become disengaged from local society, but have also failed to make the leap into the institutionalized domain of freedom. They lack either specific anchorage, or any encapsulating structure to give form to the self. From the Jimi point of view they occupy the appropriate spatial limbo of the Sepik Wahgi Divide that separates the Jimi and Wahgi Valleys. (680)

What people also gradually realized was that many of those who attended high school wound up in a nether land somewhere between the certain tradition of community and the seductive hubs of development. Sadly, Penga said of himself what others said about him: that men who had learned to enjoy the taste of a Western life-style could not float back and forth between the rural village, the mission station, and the urban center. Intellectually, but even more as the emptiness of unfulfilled desire, they lived the schism between the hollow promise of freedom, wealth, and excitement and the grounding of identity in kinship and community. As for the community, it saw education in terms of a physics of finite relativity. Education could bring something to the community but was more likely to drain something away as those who were educated sought the urban world. Between the polar opposites of the rural and the urban, the educated were the mediating agents, neither secure and contributing to their communities nor successful and celebrated in the urban world.

In essence, the local view was that modernity had created a polar world. If the material riches of the West was the telos of the new road, that of education was an urban job unfettered by the awesome constraints of community life. The new road ran in both directions. Roads could not only be ports of entry for the goods, money, knowledge, and power that would elevate the local communities, but also sirens that could lure people away as they migrated to urban centers never to return, vacuums that could suck wealth out of local communities, and channels that demand the goods produced by local communities (particularly coffee) but return only piddling sums of money. In the physics of the finite relativity, the physical loss to the community created by the outflow of goods and people corresponds to, and engenders, the parasitic inflation of the other (MacLean 1994:678–79). The population, business, and future of an other increase at the expense of the community devoured by the outflow until there is a loss of *kopla* (fairness and equality), of a balance that was once perceptible and reconcilable through exchange but under the reign of modernity is invisible and seemingly irreconcilable. In contrast to the precontact world, the agents who now drain the community have no address.

Epistemology and Sports

The Western distinctions between mind and body, and between practice and pastime, permit the concept and practice of exercise to come into existence in the modern sense. In the world before contact, exercise was exertion or work (*kongon*), activity of the mindful body gardening, fence-building, walking or running from place to place, dancing, hunting, plus the entire gamut of other routines that made up life as it was known. Not only were there few formalized games, other than children's games that replicated adult practices such as hunting and gardening, but no one exercised with the intention of improving their physique. People well recognized that the size of a muscle was indicative of its strength but put very little store in the appearance of muscle per se. They did not intimately associate muscular physique with social status, beauty, or eroticism and accordingly, did not attempt to develop their bodies. Agents grasped each other's body much more through the skin, eyes, and language, all of which they could alter without recourse to jogging, stretching, or weight lifting. Moreover, the notion of self-directed intention and management, that someone would willingly punish their body in order to please themselves with its appearance, struck the Maring as somewhere between amusing and bizarre. The Maring, like other Melanesians, were something of cultural specialists in body decoration, but never as a self-directed intention or as part of the project of producing one's own subjectivity. Rather, they decorated their bodies as a means of performing operations on themselves that transformed their sociality toward others. The body in relation to others was foregrounded in respect to the body in itself.

A significant, though little commented upon, aspect of the school's construction of the Western person was the introduction of sports. By this I mean less the character of physical activity or the rigors of a specific game than the forms of epistemology and desire that the school inculcated through pastimes such as soccer. If the priests and teachers imagined the school as a domain where the mind was visible, if the church was the home of spirituality and the suppression of carnal desires, then the sports field was the world given over wholly to the body. Whereas the body was supposed to be invisible in school and church, acting as a kind of placeholder for the mind and spirit, where the voice was highly regimented in school and church to the point of making silence a virtue in and of itself, the sports field was the expression of repressed voices and bodies. And just behind the school and church was a soccer field—quite a concession in light of the fact that in these extremely rugged environs it was hard to come by ground flat enough to support a building. Not surprisingly, the houses of the local teachers surrounded the field on two sides.

The segregation of the mindful, competitive, and indoor activity of

learning from the bodily, team-oriented, outdoor activity of sports was a silent and powerful way of impressing Western values upon the students. The immanent lesson was that the space, temporality, sociality, and activities that defined the classroom versus the sports field reflected and reinforced the distinction between mind and body. It gave practical resonance to the distinction, a site for the ontological play on reality to take place. Equally compelling and far from the reach of consciousness was the premise that the movement of the body from inside (the classroom) to outside was homologous to the inner thinking mind in respect to the outward acting body. Sports as an aspect of schooling began to bring into existence new sets of oppositions that it sought to embody in the movements of agents' bodies. If the competitive individualism of test-taking was foreign to the Maring mind, the sports team was no less so. That teams come together to achieve an abstract and seemingly socially meaningless end, to defeat an arbitrary collection of others, was a puzzling but powerful dimension of the modern. Where traditional groups were composed of kin relations whose relationship transcended any specific task, the team was an admixture of persons whose relationship was specific to the game at hand. In that respect, the team replicated the multiethnic community that was Koinambe. And the team was supposed to exhibit teamwork in the abstract as opposed to the forms of practical cooperative activity that characterized ordinary life.

The Educated Individual

In order for all this to take place there needs to be a new, revised, or valued conception of the person. The educational system is not concerned with collectivities, but with individuals, such that it is surprised by the collective or group implications of schooling. The person must be first and foremost an individual,¹ the individuated dimension of local notions of personhood now elevated to ontological primacy. The individual must be the privileged site of the production and reception of knowledge. And this individual is understood as an agent who is self-moving, self-contained, an agent who will perceive and grasp the schooling situation as detached, decontextualized, and removed from other contexts for action. Learning becomes a process separate from life itself. Learning on the local view was not an objectified, detachable part of life but an inseparable part of growing, marrying, being a parent, dying, and afterlife. In the Western school model, knowledge is a kind of possession, and a person's power lies in an ability to control their destiny and other people. The notion was that information is a kind of property, it exists as a right of its owner rather than, as the Maring would have it, as a multiplicity of context-sensitive

rights. Further, the person is divided into a physical body, producible through physical education programs (e.g., exercise), and a nonphysical entity called the mind, which in a racial-like way bore a particular mentality. In this vision, the best way for a person to realize his/her character was by being industrious, by maintaining a steady vigil and firm grip over his/her own body and mind.

If we reconstruct the Maring world prior to contact, we see that the system of social relations in which persons were embedded ordered the trajectory of their lives. They depended to a large extent on others for knowledge about themselves, the intrinsic relationship between persons and the things they had given as gifts, or the notion that people grow as beneficiaries of the actions of others acting in relation to still others. This stood in marked contrast to the notion promulgated by the education system that a person orders his/her life by making a plan, and that an orderly, progressive, and successful life is a question of the relationship between life, a plan, and its execution. This was, of course, laid out in the time sequence of going to primary school, then if a person is industrious enough to high school, and still further to college in Port Moresby. There was a spatial dimension in that a person moves further and further from their village, first to Mt. Hagen and then to a major city, so that geography recapitulates epistemology. Life was much more a matter of balance in the indigenous worldview. There was no notion of the future as a neutral space in terms of which one's lifetime may be arranged, nor any notion that a person's future can be determined in terms of individuality. In a word, a person's future does not confront him/her as an objectified but unfilled time that was made meaningful and productive through the imagination of a future in terms of a plan or goals or ambitions.

Conclusion

The system of education introduced by the missionaries began to transform the Maring world far less by the content of what was taught than by the underlying epistemological and ontological premises that were embedded in the form of instruction. Not least, the mission schooling system helped to canonize a representation of the modern world that all future representations and responses would have to take into consideration. Institutionally, the mission assumed that there was a field of education endowed with its own logic, spaces, boundaries, temporalities, and forms of reward. The model school was a model of the model society—a place where self-managing, self-contained individuals competed and cooperated in quest of the self-improvement of mind, body, and spirit. This schooling was related to nationness insofar as it was meant to produce the citizen

individual whose identity formation was dominated by personal and national identities, with other forms of identity taking a subsumed place.

The mission, consistent with its vision of the person as a possessive, autonomous individual, insisted that persons be self-managing and that a principal goal of socialization was self-management skills. Under the regime of the modern, education becomes an extension of the political system insofar as it becomes directly implicated in the exercise of social control. One might add that in contrast to the West, where the extension of education to the disenfranchised (such as minority groups) is invariably accompanied by the strengthening of collateral forms of social control (e.g., judicial and prison systems), the senior and dominant generation of Maring, because they were also dominated, cannot exercise the option taken by the dominant class in the West. Mission education also could not help but promote encompassment and reinforce the generational rift in that a judgment on fitness for higher education, employment on the mission station, and so on was also a judgment on the use of a language that was the language of the West.